

VOLUNTEER VOICE

A newsletter by and for Pinellas County government volunteers.



August 2016

We're on the web at www.pinellascounty.org/volunteer

Youth Program Builds Bright Futures

By Libby Carnahan, Florida Sea Grant Agent, UF/IFAS Extension

The UF/IFAS Extension Ranger Naturalist 4H Leadership Program at Weedon Island Preserve provides a service learning opportunity for youth (ages 15-18) to help them build leadership skills and environmental awareness. The program includes a balance of learning in the classroom and service in the field. It also includes exercises in knowledge-building and life skill development, teamwork, and individual leadership.

This summer, six students graduated from the Weedon Island Preserve program. They each completed at least 75 hours and an individual service project. The completed service projects will be used to help educate Weedon Island Preserve visitors of all ages about ethical fishing, endangered



species, and the impacts of human activity on the ecosystem.

Some 2016 program highlights included:

- microplastics awareness,
- coastal cleanups,
- invasive plant removal, and
- working alongside professional archaeologists to sort pre-historic artifacts.

Through the program, students completed the Coast Guard Auxiliary Boating Safety Course, and earned CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation), First Aid, and AED (Automated External Defibrillator) certifications.

[Continued page 3.](#)



Click icons/page numbers to view

INSIDE

A BIG THANK YOU

**Environmental
Management Volunteers
Focus Group Participants
Sought
Gone but not Forgotten**

**Volunteers Make It Happen
in the Shade
Happenings**

Volunteer Voice

Graphics, layout, editor - Mary Sault
msault@pinellascounty.org or call
(727) 464-5098.

How to participate: Send questions, article submissions, upcoming events, photos, or story ideas to mkvam@pinellascounty.org.



Carol Gray, Chief Park Ranger, sends a BIG THANK YOU to these Pinellas Trail volunteers!



Tom Rapson – He recently completed the Pinellas Trail Memorial inventory to assist Pinellas Trails, Inc. manage this program. Tom is assisting with maintenance of the Trail counters and dedicates many hours to patrol.

John & Diane Helvin – They have dedicated numerous hours of cart patrols, removing litter and trash, and conducting Trail maintenance including the Clearwater community project. John and Diane have become very hands-on helping the Trail Rangers complete routine duties and providing patrols in their absence.

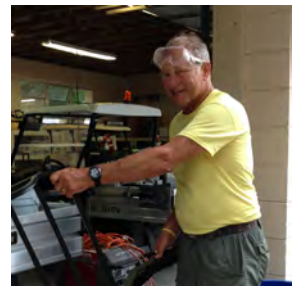


Gary Walkup – He has provided a consistent weekly presence on the East Lake/Keystone Road section of the Trail conducting all types of trail maintenance including litter removal, sign removal, bollard painting, vegetation trimming, managing erosion issues, and the list goes on. Recently Gary cross-trained a fellow Auxiliary Ranger.



Harry Chambers – He assisted with the bollard building project and the recent Clearwater community project on the Trail.

Bill & Phyllis Romanski – They have dedicated numerous hours to cart patrols, Trail maintenance and building bollards. During the most recent bollard building, Bill & Phyll, Harry Chambers, Jim Wedlake and Larry Herring repaired and/or constructed 147 bollards!

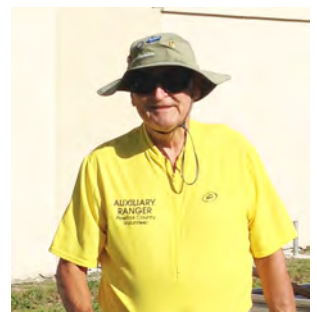


Jim Wedlake – Jim donated a utility rack for the Rangers' Trail carts.



Larry Herring – He has assisted with bollard building projects, committed to assisting new Auxiliary Rangers with ride-alongs on the Trail, has filled in on patrols in the absence of Trail Rangers and recently assisted with the Clearwater community clean-up project. Larry is currently assisting with the maintenance of the Trail Counters.

Bob Young – He initiated the metal bollard painting project and painted all the metal bollards from 38th Ave. in St. Petersburg up to Jones St. in Clearwater. Bob continues to maintain the painted mile markers on the Trail as well.



Water Quality Monitoring and Boating Safety



Environmental Management volunteers and interns recently had the opportunity to learn about boat safety because of their involvement with surface water quality monitoring programs on boats throughout the County. Volunteers and interns accompany County staff into the field to learn about sample collection methods and how environmental impacts like illegal discharges, landscaping practices, algal blooms, and wildlife interactions affect surface water quality in the County waters.

*Contributed by Natasha Dickrell,
Environmental Management Division*

Seeking Focus Group Participants

Pinellas County Government will host a series of focus groups that will aim at improving communications to residents. They are currently seeking participants who are available to attend one of the three events listed below, all to be held in Clearwater. The dates and times are as follows:

- Wednesday, September 14th – 6:30-7:30 pm (seeking participants 18 to 34 years of age living in Pinellas County)
- Thursday, September 22nd – 6:30-7:30 pm (all Pinellas County residents over 18 years of age welcome to apply for consideration)
- Thursday, September 29th – 6:30-7:30 pm (all Pinellas County residents over 18 years of age welcome to apply for consideration)

If you are interested, available and meet the criteria to participate, please complete a brief [questionnaire and application](#) for consideration.

Youth Program — *Continued from first page.*



Since 2011, 35 students have graduated from the Ranger Naturalist Program. Students can apply their volunteer hours towards Florida Bright Futures scholarships, or other scholarship or award applications.

To learn more about the Ranger Naturalist Program

email Libby Carnahan, lcarnahan@pinellascounty.org.



Gone but not Forgotten

Excerpted from the Tampa Bay Times.

Jacqueline “Jackie” Green, 74, passed away July 24 after battling cancer. She was a volunteer at Heritage Village in the gift shop. She also volunteered at Northside Hospital.

She always loved to work in her garden and be surrounded by beautiful plants. She also loved crafting and making beautiful cards for all occasions.

A bookkeeper for most of her career, she retired from Family Resources after 15 years there.

Jackie will be missed by her family and many friends. She leaves her ex-husband, one brother, five children, ten grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

The family is honoring her wishes to be cremated and buried next to her mother in Roswell, New Mexico, at a later date.

Volunteers Make It Happen in the Shade House

By Terry Berube, President, Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation

There are so many wonderful opportunities for volunteers in the Florida Botanical Gardens. They are an indispensable group and we would be lost without them. One of the most interesting groups is the **Monday Morning Shade House Ladies**. They are responsible for propagating plants for use in the Gardens, and to be sold at the annual Gift and Plant Sale. They also take in plants that are not thriving in the Gardens and bring them back to life. Some are involved in making the plant signs and for populating the Garden's **geographic information system (GIS)**.

It is a marvelous group of ladies, with Foundation Secretary and Master Gardener, **Emma Eshbaugh** leading the group consisting of Master Gardeners **Barbara Hammond, Anne Szabo and Antonia Waldon**. Their work varies each week.

Sometimes they are out scouting the Gardens for plants to propagate while most of the time they are propagating the newly cut specimens and carefully placing them in their new home. They even have the honor of weeding, fertilizing and cleaning up the huge shade house.

Propagation is a great way to grow a plant without breaking the bank. Volunteers learn that it also allows you to add to your plant list with a plant that is hard to find. All of the volunteers are Master Gardeners and have a strong knowledge of plant propagation. They make their magic with stem cuttings, leaf cuttings, root cuttings and air layering. You can learn more



Emma, Barbara and Tina in the Sign and GIS room

about propagation at: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg108>.

When not in the shade house and with the help of Master Gardener **Tina Love**, Emma and Barbara make signs and work on the GIS. Plant identification is very important in the Garden and it requires a vast amount of research. Knowing what plants you have in a Botanical Gardens is important to our visitors as it allows them to learn more about

the plants they find interesting. GIS also allows the FBG to keep track of the all the different species we have, the age of the plants and where they are located in the Gardens.



Emma and Barbara working in the Shade House

- Sept. 17, Preserve Work
- Day, Brooker Creek Preserve
- Join the Friends of
- Brooker Creek Preserve to remove exotic vegetation and nuisance plants from the preserve. Participants are asked to bring work gloves, clippers, shovels, hand saws and loppers. This is hard work and recommended for strong volunteers ages 12 and up. Water and snacks provided. 8 to 11 a.m. For additional information, call Evan Earle at (727) 515-9545.

- Sept. 24, Paddle the Preserve – Coastal Cleanup
- Weedon Island Preserve

- UF/IFAS Extension/Florida Sea Grant Agent Libby Carnahan will lead volunteers with canoes and kayaks to help clean up the difficult-to-reach shorelines of Weedon Island Preserve. 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Registration is required and space is limited. Register online at www.weedonislandpreserve.eventbrite.com.

- Oct. 14, The Great Weedon Bird Quest, Weedon Island Preserve

- Participants will learn the identifying marks and behaviors of Pinellas County's year-round feathered residents and seasonal visitors while assisting in compiling an annual checklist of the Preserve's birds. This hike is designed to take advantage of all levels of birding experience. Register online at www.weedonislandpreserve.eventbrite.com.

Happenings